

UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE

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October 11, 1949

Hon. Dean Acheson
Secretary
Department of State
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

On April 11, 1949, the Senate approved Senate Resolution 50 which authorized and directed the Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce "to make a full and complete study and investigation", among other things "of such problems as it may deem proper relating to all matters relating to radio, telegraph, and telephone communications including (a) the problems relating to American common carriers operating in the domestic and international fields, including the relationship of these problems to the national security of the United States; (b) the problems presented by requirements of international treaties and conventions in relation to such revisions as may be necessary to the Communications Act of 1934; (c) problems arising from unprecedented demands for frequencies for such communications services as television, safety and special services, including aviation, railroads, busses, trucks, taxicabs; common carrier uses; and industrial uses; and the policies which the Congress should adopt for the granting of such allocations"

The subcommittee on communications, of which I am chairman, is seriously concerned with the frequency shortage problem and is making a series of inquiries from various government departments designed to elicit information with respect to this situation. It will be appreciated, therefore, if the Department of State will supply us with answers to the following questions:

1. State whether the Department operates a communications service of its own; if so, under what legal authority this is done; length of time such communications service has been operated.

2. State the number of radio frequencies assigned to and the number being used for communications service as of January 1, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949.

3. State the daily average number of text words transmitted over such communications facilities during 1948 and 1949; and state the lowest and highest number of text words transmitted on any one day in 1948 and 1949 over such facilities; explain fully the geographic use of such frequencies, i.e., the number of circuits from where to where; state the average number of hours per day during 1948 and 1949 that each such circuit was in use; state the average number of hours daily that such circuit was idle in 1948 and 1949; taking into consideration the equipment and personnel, state the average daily maximum capacity of each such circuit.

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4. Explain fully whether the Department of State makes use of the communication facilities of any other department or agency of government, and if so, answer fully all applicable questions listed in question number 3 above. Explain whether the Department of State refunds to such department or agency any sums for transmission of communications, and if so, state the amounts so refunded or charged in 1948, and 1949, and to which department or agency.

5. Explain fully whether the Department of State makes use of the communications facilities of any private commercial communications carrier. If such use is made, state for 1948 and up to September 1, 1949, the daily average number of text words transmitted by each such communications carrier; give a typical daily breakdown of number of text words by points of origin and destination transmitted by private commercial communications carriers; the amounts paid to each communication carrier for services rendered for each of the years 1940 through 1948 and monthly up to September 1, 1949.

6. State whether the Department of State operates a wire line system. If so, describe fully the extent of such wire line system; number of miles of wire leased; geographic points connected; number and kind of equipment; details as to extent of use similar to answers supplied to question number 3 above.

7. State the number of employees in the Department of State employed full time and part time in the operation and maintenance of communications services; state the total amount paid in salaries to such employees for the year 1948; state the amount appropriated for and the amount expended for communications services for each of the last five fiscal years indicating the amounts spent for maintenance and installation of new equipment and the amount for operations.

It is probable that when the above information is supplied, additional data may be required preliminary to hearings.

Very sincerely yours,

/s/ Ernest W. McFarland